

Dear FCC Commissioners & Staff:

I live in a rural town where we can only make free phone calls to the next rural towns to us, one north and one south of us. It has been a godsend to have a local ISP available, so we can call a local phone number and connect to the Internet. The ISP here has the equipment for DSL, but is not allowed to use it, because the local phone company (Citizen's Communications, now called Frontier) has said they 'can't'.

In rural areas there are not only farmers; there are many other capable people, like educators, writers, medical service people, craftsmen, artists, various small business owners, etc. who serve community members on a personal basis. A local ISP, like a local market, can tailor services to the individual. Local ISPs, who know their customers personally, are able to do their part for the larger economy, because they can network. They keep local businesses in touch with each other, and functioning, through communication and mutual education. Their children can go on to bigger things, because they have gotten more education on the Internet; maybe because they would not have been able to travel to far cities for their specific needs.

I would like to note also that 10 - 20 years ago, according to business magazines, banks discovered that small business owners were more likely to pay their bills and loans than huge corporations, and this still seems to be the case. If small businesses are put OUT of business, they may be forced to begin claiming bankruptcy all over the country. This is not what they want, and these days, people are less likely to trust large, unseen companies that are in control of their ability to simply communicate. This is my opinion. Being not able to hold a full time job, due to disability and distance from appropriate work, I would certainly like to run a small business myself. I am 60 now, and would enjoy working at writing and/or publishing, but could not do it without a computer and the Internet. I work with, but do not own, the local ISP, 'The Circuit's Edge', in this town.

Sincerely,

Patricia Myers  
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